

3
screw conveyor 9 can rest on slide runners 24. A bearing 25 is provided at only one end of screw conveyor 9. At the upper end of the treatment chamber 6 there is a discharge element 12 with a discharge chute 13. The discharge element 12 is also provided with a slide valve 14. A lock could, of course, also be provided here instead of the slide valve 14 or in addition to same.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 25 and 34 without prejudice or disclaimer thereto.

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please find attached a Submission of Proposed Drawing Changes.

REMARKS

Claims 23-24, 26-33, and 35-47 are pending. Responsive to the objection to the specification at paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the heating means of Claim 41 is described in the specification on page 6, lines 1-3. Responsive to the objection to the drawings detailed at paragraph 2 of the Office Action, a submission of proposed drawing changes is submitted concurrently herewith. An indication of the acceptability of the change is respectfully requested.

Claims 25 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for indefiniteness. By way of the present amendment, Claims 25 and 34 have been cancelled. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 23-28, 31-33, 35, 40-43 and 45-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,270,000 to Goldner et al. This

rejection is respectfully traversed. The present invention, as set forth in independent Claim 23, is a method for treating contaminated material, wherein the material is fed into a conveyor or system comprising two treatment zones where the material is subject to heat and pressure. As further detailed in independent Claim 33, the present invention is also directed to an apparatus for treating contaminated material comprising a two zone treatment chamber, including a liquid reservoir and means to generate steam pressure for disinfection.

Goldner et al. disclose an apparatus and method for disinfecting contaminated materials, comprising loading, treatment, and unloading sections (column 3, lines 49-55). Goldner et al do not disclose the use of two distinct treatment zones. The apparatus and method of Goldner et al. are designed as an open system, so any developing vapor can escape. The open system is therefore not capable of generating steam pressure. The design of the Goldner et al treatment chamber includes a slant that may at times contain liquid from the material, however, there is no teaching that a specific liquid reservoir should exist to moisten the contaminated materials. Because Goldner et al. fail to disclose or suggest two treatment zones, treatment with steam pressure, or a liquid reservoir, the rejection is not proper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 44 and 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,270,000 to Goldner et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed. For the reasons set forth above, Goldner et al. fail to disclose or suggest all limitations of Claim 33, the independent claim from which rejected Claims 44 and 47 depend. Further, Goldner et al. fail to render obvious all

elements of the independent claim, or the further limitations set forth in the rejected claims. Claim 44 further directs that an apparatus of the invention has a screw conveyor with a bearing at only one end and which rests on a slide runner. While Goldner et al. disclose a conveying device, such as a conveying screw (column 5, lines 26-28), they do not discuss the presence or absence of a bearing and/or a slide runner. The specific elements of the conveying screw claimed are not disclosed or suggested by Goldner et al. The reference, which fails to disclose a bearing and/or slide runner, cannot render obvious the claimed features.

Claim 47 is directed to a shredder unit plus a plurality of treating apparatuses in parallel. Goldner et al. show, in Figure 1, a single treatment apparatus (see description of Figure 1 at column 3, lines 49-53). Granulation of the waste material takes place within the treatment apparatus with a rotating blade (column 4, lines 31-39). A single treatment apparatus with a rotating blade cannot be fairly read to render obvious a shredder connected to a plurality of treatment apparatuses in parallel. Accordingly, the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 29-30 and 37-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in light of U.S. Patent No. 5,270,000 to Goldner et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,425,925 to Kline et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed. For the reasons set forth above, Goldner et al. failed to disclose or suggest all elements of independent claims 23 and 33 from which the rejected claims depended. Kline et al. cannot remedy this deficiency in disclosure.

Kline et al. teach a system for treating infectious waste, however, they also fail to disclose two treatment zones or subjecting the material to pressure. Because the references, whether taken singly or in combination, fail to teach or render obvious the elements of the independent claims, the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn. Reconsideration of all pending claims is in order and is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #1997/49442).

Respectfully submitted,

July 15, 2002



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CAM#: 37303.001

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDMENTS

A screw conveyor 9 having a conveyor spiral 10 extends into the treatment chamber 6. The screw conveyor 9 is driven by a drive 11. The treatment chamber 6 is slanted upwards in the transport direction of the screw conveyor 9, with, for example, an angle to the horizontal of approximately 10° to 40°. The screw conveyor 9 can rest on slide runners 24. A bearing 25 is provided at only one end of screw conveyor 9. At the upper end of the treatment chamber 6 there is a discharge element 12 with a discharge chute 13. The discharge element 12 is also provided with a slide valve 14. A lock could, of course, also be provided here instead of the slide valve 14 or in addition to same.